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C O N F I D E N T I A L WARSAW 001387

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/28/2018
TAGS: [MARR](#) [PREL](#) [MCAP](#) [PL](#)
SUBJECT: STAFFDEL YOUNG: POLES LOOKING FOR DEFENSE AID IF
MD STALLS

Classified By: DCM Quanrud for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) StaffDel Young told GoP interlocutors November 26 that the new U.S. administration's review of missile defense (MD) effectiveness could take longer than 8-10 months. In response, working-level officials from the Ministries of Defense and Foreign Affairs replied that a long delay or cancellation of the proposed MD program in Poland would be "difficult to explain" publicly. The MFA's Director of the Americas Artur Orzechowski and Deputy Director of Security Policy Marek Szczygiel emphasized that the GoP understood the rationale behind the review of the proposed deployments in Poland and the Czech Republic. Warsaw was optimistic that the program would go forward but was resigned to Washington's decision-making process. However, if the program were not implemented here, they asked that Washington consider a "stronger strategic relationship" between the two countries or significantly increase foreign military sales funding beyond the current level of \$27 million per year to accelerate Poland's defense modernization.

¶2. (C) Members of the staffdel explained that the administration's review would encompass the full range of MD activities, including an examination of the Missile Defense Agency's testing and appropriations processes. The results of interceptor tests in 2009 would have a major impact upon future funding levels, as would continual evaluation of the potential threat posed by Iran and other countries. The staffdel noted that non-U.S. views and reactions will be considered as well.

¶3. (C) Szczygiel said Poland had no influence over the effectiveness of the interceptors proposed for deployment here; it was up to the U.S. to ensure that the system worked. He added, however, that a decision not to go forward with deployment of MD -- and the roughly simultaneous deployment of Patriot missiles -- would be perceived as a "Russian victory." Poland has already paid a political price by signing the Ballistic Missile Defense Agreement (BMDA), an action that complicated the current government's efforts to improve relations with Russia, but it has not seen any benefits in return for the BMDA. Szczygiel added that Poland intended to hand over to Russia that day (November 26) its transparency and confidence building proposals in an effort to assuage Moscow's concerns about MD deployment.

¶4. (C) Colonel Janusz Szupryczynski, Deputy Director of the Missile Defense Office, described the ongoing BMDA implementation process, including negotiations concerning the supplemental Status of Forces and land use agreements. Szupryczynski emphasized that it would be "unfortunate" if the MD program did not proceed after Poland had invested so much energy in the talks. He conceded that there is no current threat to Poland from Iran, but underscored that it would be prudent to deploy a reliable system in the event

such a threat emerged in the near future.

15. (U) StaffDel Young has cleared this message.
ASHE